



For Immediate Release
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FY 09 Budget Request Reveals a Significant Increase in Budget Needs

DOVER—The Department of Services for Children, Youth, and Their Families today presented its FY 2009 Governor's Recommended Budget to the Joint Finance Committee. The proposed budget includes a 3.4 percent increase over last year, totaling a budget of \$176.5 million. This increase would give the Department's leadership the ability to continue its efforts to secure the infrastructure of the Department through adjusting staffing needs; expanding critical community-based contracted services; and addressing the increased federal mandates while coping with significant declines in federal financial aid.

"Our mission is to provide leadership and advocacy for all of Delaware's children," said Cabinet Secretary Cari DeSantis. "The Governor's Recommended Budget today continues our commitment to that end, not only to fulfill our legal mandate, but, more importantly, to do the right thing for our kids. We need to be able to provide what has been promised to the children; to make sure that we follow through with our vision to *Think of the Child First*."

Secretary DeSantis also took time during the hearing to recognize Governor Ruth Ann Minner and the General Assembly for their unrelenting support of the Children's Department during the past seven years.

"Our combined efforts prove the possibilities that come from coalescing around a vision, planning a path, and working together to get it done," said Secretary DeSantis. "Please accept my public thanks for your role in assuring a better future for Delaware children."

On any given day, the Delaware Children's Department provides services to approximately 9,000 children who have been abused, neglected, abandoned, dependent, or have mental health or substance abuse problems, and/or have been adjudicated delinquent by the Courts. Over 22,000 unduplicated children receive services each year through the Delaware Children's Department. Thousands more Delaware children received services from the Department through home-, community-, or school-based prevention and early intervention programs, and child care licensing. For more information, please visit <http://www.kids.delaware.gov>.

Our Mission: The Delaware Department of Services for Children, Youth & Their Families provides leadership and advocacy for all of Delaware's children, while endorsing a holistic approach to enable children to reach their fullest potential.

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